



Department for Education

2025-0037522

Josh MacAlister OBE MP
Minister for Children and Families

Ian Murray MP

By email: ian.murray.mp@parliament.uk

Your ref: IM109714

30 October 2025

Dear Ian,

Thank you for your correspondence of 3 October, addressed to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, on behalf of your constituent, Mr Paul H [REDACTED] of [REDACTED], EH16 6 [REDACTED] Edinburgh, regarding clean air in schools. Your email has been passed to this department, and I am replying as the minister responsible for this policy area.

One of the department's priorities is to reduce overall school absence and maximise the number of children who regularly attend school. One way to achieve this is by maintaining good ventilation, which creates a healthy indoor environment for staff and students. Letting fresh air into indoor spaces can help remove air that contains virus particles which reduces the risk of airborne respiratory illness (including COVID-19, flu, and strep A) and can improve pupils' alertness and concentration.

Between September 2021 and April 2023, the department delivered over 700,000 CO₂ monitors to over 45,000 education settings to help manage ventilation and identify poorly ventilated spaces. Between January 2022 and April 2023, the department provided over 9,000 air cleaning units to over 1,300 settings. The air cleaning units were distributed to settings that had identified poor ventilation through sustained high CO₂ readings and would require lengthy remedial building works to address the poor ventilation.

There are no current plans to centrally fund air cleaning units. However, schools can purchase air cleaning units if they wish. They can be purchased directly from suppliers, or for larger volumes, they can be purchased through a number of public sector buying organisations, such as Crown Commercial Services. The department's recommended specification for air cleaning units can be found on GOV.UK at: [tinyurl.com/HRZ8Y5MY](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/air-cleaning-units-specification). The department has also published guidance on how to use CO₂ monitors and air cleaning units, which can be found on GOV.UK at: [tinyurl.com/E69S72BP](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/using-co2-monitors-and-air-cleaning-units). It is important that air cleaning unit are not used as a substitute for fresh air.

Thank you for writing on this important matter. I hope that this information is helpful.

Yours sincerely,

Josh MacAlister OBE MP
Minister for Children and Families

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